

A Preliminary List of the Birds of the Karoo National Park

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A preliminary list of the birds of the Karoo National Park is presented. Details of status, habitat preference and breeding (where applicable) are given. A supplementary list of birds which require confirmation or which were only recorded in the park before the study period, is included.

Key words: Birds, check list, status, breeding, habitat, Karoo.

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Introduction

The Karoo National Park, which was proclaimed in September 1979, is situated in the central Great Karoo near Beaufort West and is 27 114 hectares in extent. No list of the birds has been published but the first two wardens, Messrs. Bryden and Van Rooyen, both compiled lists of birds they had seen.

The present study was commenced in May 1984 and concluded in October 1986, a period of 30 months. The senior author visited the park on 25 occasions during this period ensuring a uniform coverage of the seasons. The first eight months were excessively dry, the Beaufort West district experiencing a particularly severe drought. The drought was partially relieved in January 1985 and substantial rains fell again in November/December 1985. The authors were thus able to study the bird-life in both wet and dry conditions.

Habitats

The dominant topographical feature of the park is the Great Escarpment which has peaks of up to 1 800 m above sea level while the lower plain has an average elevation of 1 000 m above sea level.

This variation in altitude results in a distinct contrast between the vegetation of the upper plateau, where grassveld is dominant, and the lower plain where scrub and thornveld prevail. The park can conveniently be divided into nine major bird habitats.

- i) Scrub. This stunted vegetation cover, with shrubs seldom exceeding 70 cm in height, covers much of the plain and the lower slopes of the escarpment and supports many of the Karoo endemic bird species to be found in the park. These include Karoo Chat *Cercomela schlegelii* and Karoo Eremomela, *Eremomela gregalis*.
- ii) Thornveld and riverine growth. This vegetation, found on the plains only, is by far the richest habitat in the park for birds. Typical species here include Southern Tchagra *Tchagra tchagra*, Pirit Batis *Batis pririt* and Namaqua Prinia *Prinia substriata*.

- iii) Taller bush on hillsides. Mainly found on the slopes of the escarpment in the more sheltered ravines. Southern Grey Tit *Parus afer* and Layard's Titbabbler *Parisoma layardi* are most readily seen in this habitat.
- iv) Grassveld. Predominantly on the plateau. Greywing Francolin *Francolinus africanus* and Stonechat *Saxicola torquata* are two typical species of this rather birdless habitat.
- v) Cliffs, rocky ravines and boulder-strewn hillsides. This harsh environment provides many species with breeding sites. Black Eagle *Aquila verreauxii*, Booted Eagle *Hieraaetus pennatus*, Rock Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*, Redwinged Starling *Onychognathus morio* and the Palewinged Starling *Onychognathus nabouroup* are all regularly encountered here. The elusive Cinnamonbreasted Warbler *Euryptila subcinnamomea* is an inhabitant of boulder-strewn hillsides.
- vi) Dams. The Gamka Dam is the only permanent dam in the park. It is too deep and its sides too steep to attract many species but African Black Duck *Anas sparsa* and South African Shelduck *Tadorna cana* are usually present. The smaller dams only hold water after substantial rains and are usually too muddy to support much bird-life.
- vii) Human habitation. Stolshoek (the headquarters of the park) and Doornhoek are both situated on the plains and were originally farm houses. Mountain view is a small camp on the plateau. Several species are attracted to these buildings on which they nest. Little Swift *Apus affinis*, Greater Striped Swallow *Hirundo cucullata*, Rock Martin *Hirundo fuligula* and House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* are common in this habitat.
- viii) Gardens. The fruit trees attract species such as the Olive Thrush *Turdus olivaceus* while the larger trees are utilised by the Fiscal Flycatcher *Sigelus silens* and Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*.
- ix) Alien Vegetation. Three groves of poplars *Populus alba*, totaling less than five hectares, represent the only significant alien vegetation outside the gardens referred to above. Redbreasted Sparrowhawk *Accipiter rufiventris* and Hadedda Ibis *Bostrychia hagedash*, both of which use these trees as nest sites, were the only two species regularly present in this habitat.

Methods

The average visit to the park lasted three days. During a visit as much time as possible was spent in each of the major habitats. Particular attention was given to breeding activity as this has been neglected in the past in the Great Karoo. Taped bird calls were used when necessary to locate the more skulking species which could otherwise have been overlooked. One of the authors (HHB) was resident in the park for the full study period and during the course of his work was able to contribute much additional information.

Results

Nomenclature follows the SAOS Checklist (1980) except in the use of English names where the authors have considered it advisable to follow the generally accepted names, and numbers, used by Maclean (1985).

- 1 *Struthio camelus* Linnaeus, 1758 Ostrich
Volstruis
Status: A small feral population occurs on the plains.
Habitat: Scrub.
- 8 *Tachybaptus ruficollis* (Pallas), 1764 Dabchick
Kleinduikertjie
Status: Single birds were seen on Gamka Dam and the pools below in the Gamka River. November and December records only.

- 55 *Phalacrocorax carbo* (Linnaeus), 1760 Whitebreasted Cormorant
Witborsduiker
Status: Present in small numbers (up to five birds) on the Gamka Dam.
No records from April to July.
- 58 *Phalacrocorax africanus* (Gmelin), 1758 Reed Cormorant
Rietduiker
Status: Recorded in November 1984 at the Gamka Dam during severe
drought.
- 60 *Anhinga melanogaster* (Lacepede and Daudin), 1802 Darter
Slanghalsvoël
Remarks: A single bird was recorded in July 1984 on the Gamka Dam.
- 62 *Ardea cinerea* Linnaeus, 1758 Grey Heron
Blouereier
Status: Eight pairs bred on trees growing from a cliff overlooking the
Gamka Dam. Occasionally seen on the plateau. No April or May
records.
Habitat: Temporary pools and streams.
Recorded breeding: August to January.
- 63 *Ardea melanocephala* Vigors and Children, 1826 Blackheaded Heron
Swartkopreier
Status: Mainly recorded on the plateau where single birds were noted.
No records from April to August. One pair bred on a cliff over-
looking the Gamka Dam.
Habitat: Grassveld and Scrub.
- 76 *Nycticorax nycticorax* (Linnaeus), 1758 Blackcrowned Night Heron
Gewone Nagreier
Status: Not seen during the dry year of 1984 but after the rains in No-
vember 1985 two pairs bred on the cliff overlooking the Gamka
Dam. At least one pair successfully raised young.
Habitat: Reed-fringed pools below the Gamka Dam and the temporary
dams at Stolshoek and Puttersvlei.
- 81 *Scopus umbretta* Gmelin, 1789 Hamerkop
Hamerkop
Status: Scarce; single birds were noted in September and November.
Habitat: Streams and pools when these hold water.
Remarks: At least three nests were found. They were all situated in
kloofs at the base of the escarpment.
- 83 *Ciconia ciconia* (Linnaeus), 1758 White Stork
Witooievaar
Status: Five birds were seen in November and December 1985 after
heavy rain.
- 84 *Ciconia nigra* (Linnaeus), 1758 Black Stork
Grootswartooievaar
Status: Only one pair present breeding on a cliff overlooking the Gamka
Dam.
Habitat: Pools along streams on both the plains and the plateau. Seen

- regularly at Stolshoek in the streambed.
Recorded breeding: August.
- 94 *Bostrychia hagedash* (Latham), 1790 Hadeda Ibis
Hadeda
Status: A breeding summer visitor recorded from September to March.
Three or four pairs bred in the park.
Habitat: Largely confined to the grassveld on the plateau with three records from the Stolshoek area. Bred in the poplar woods and on the cliff overlooking the Gamka Dam.
Recorded breeding: November to February.
Remarks: A recent arrival to the central Karoo first appearing in 1980.
- 95 *Platalea alba* Scopoli, 1786 African Spoonbill
Lepelaar
Status: There is no suitable habitat in the park but has been seen overflying the plains.
- 102 *Alopochen aegyptiacus* (Linnaeus), 1766 Egyptian Goose
Kolgens
Status: Recorded from July to December. Never more than five birds seen on one visit.
Habitat: Largely confined to the Gamka Dam but occasionally seen on the smaller dams when these hold water. Occurs both on the plains and on the plateau.
- 103 *Tadorna cana* (Gmelin), 1789 South African Shelduck
Kopereend
Status: An irregular visitor to the Gamka Dam and occasionally seen overflying the park. Attracted to the smaller dams when these hold water.
- 104 *Anas undulata* Du Bois, 1837 Yellowbilled Duck
Geelbekeend
Status: Regularly recorded on the Gamka Dam where up to eight birds were present at times. Also irregularly near a small dam on the plateau.
- 105 *Anas sparsa* Eyton, 1838 African Black Duck
Swarteend
Status: Only one pair was resident, most often encountered at the Gamka Dam, but also recorded along the Gamka River when this held water.
- 116 *Plectropterus gambensis* (Linnaeus), 1766 Spurwinged Goose
Wildemakou
Status: Irregular visitor usually seen overflying the park.
- 118 *Sagittarius serpentarius* (Miller), 1779 Secretary bird
Sekretarisvoël
Status: A visitor to the plateau, only noted between September and December.
Habitat: Low scrub and grassveld.

- 126 *Milvus migrans* (Daudin), 1800 Yellowbilled Kite
Geelbekwou
Status: Single birds were noted in November and March.
- 127 *Elanus caeruleus* (Desfontaines), 1789 Blackshouldered Kite
Blouvalk
Status: A vagrant to the park, noted on two occasions only.
- 131 *Aquila verreauxii* Lesson, 1830 Black Eagle
Witkruisarend
Status: Resident. At least eight breeding pairs were present.
Recorded breeding: July.
- 136 *Hieraaetus pennatus* (Gmelin), 1788 Booted Eagle
Dwergarend
Status: Common breeding visitor absent from May to July although a few may overwinter. Eight breeding pairs were present.
Habitat: Largely confined to the deep ravines along the lower foothills of the escarpment but often seen hunting over the plains.
Rare on the plateau.
Recorded breeding: September.
- 140 *Polemaetus bellicosus* (Daudin), 1800 Martial Eagle
Breëkoparend
Status: Only one pair present, most often seen on the plateau.
Habitat: Grassveld and the more open scrub.
Recorded breeding: June.
- 149 *Buteo buteo* (Linnaeus), 1758 Steppe Buzzard
Bruinjakkalsvoël
Status: An uncommon nonbreeding summer visitor from the Palearctic. Recorded from November to March.
Habitat: Scrub and thornveld both on the plains and the plateau.
- 152 *Buteo rufofuscus* (Forster), 1798 Jackal Buzzard
Rooiborsjakkalsvoël
• Status: Resident but unexpectedly scarce. Probably only one pair breeds in the park.
Habitat: Mainly confined to the grassveld of the plateau but occasionally seen in the rocky foothills of the escarpment.
Recorded breeding: September.
- 155 *Accipiter rufiventris* A. Smith, 1830 Redbreasted Sparrowhawk
Rooiborssperwer
Status: Resident. Three pairs were found breeding.
Habitat: Hunts over the scrub and grassveld but uses the three poplar groves in the park for roosting and breeding.
Recorded breeding: September.
- 158 *Accipiter melanoleucus* A. Smith, 1830 Black Sparrowhawk
Swartspewer
Status: Vagrant.
Remarks: In February 1986 a single bird was seen flying around a poplar grove on the plateau.

- 162 *Melierax canorus* (Thunberg), 1799 Pale Chanting Goshawk
Bleeksingvalk
Status: Resident.
Habitat: Thornveld and scrub on the plains and occasionally in scrub
vegetation on the plateau.
- 168 *Circus maurus* (Temminck), 1828 Black Harrier
Swartvleivalk
Status: Only one pair present. Recorded from October to March.
Habitat: Scrub and grassveld on the plateau.
Remarks: Suspected of breeding in the park.
- 169 *Polyboroides typus* A. Smith, 1829 Gymnogene
Kaalwangvalk
Status: Two resident pairs. One pair bred on the cliff overlooking the
Gamka Dam.
Habitat: Mainly confined to the rocky ravines of the lower escarpment.
Recorded breeding: October, November.
- 172 *Falco biarmicus* Temminck, 1825 Lanner Falcon
Edelvalk
Status: Only recorded after the good rains of January 1986 when three
small groups consisting of three or four birds were seen feeding
on locusts on the plains.
Remarks: During the locust invasion two dead specimens and two injured
birds were found in the park. Spraying operations just
outside the park boundary may have affected them
adversely.
- 181 *Falco tinnunculus* Linnaeus, 1758 Rock Kestrel
Rooivalk
Status: Resident.
Habitat: Most common in the gorges of the escarpment, but also found
on the plains at times.
Recorded breeding: October.
- 183 *Falco naumanni* Fleischer, 1818 Lesser Kestrel
Kleinrooivalk
Status: A nonbreeding summer visitor from the Palaearctic. Recorded
from November to February. As many as three hundred birds
were seen in loose flocks at times.
Habitat: Scrub or grassveld at both levels.
- 190 *Francolinus africanus* Stephens, 1819 Greywing Francolin
Bergpatrys
Status: Resident.
Habitat: Grassveld and scrub on the plateau; occasionally encountered
in scrub on the plains.
Remarks: Not yet found breeding within the park but almost certainly
does so.
- 200 *Coturnix coturnix* Linnaeus, 1758 Common Quail
Afrikaanse kwartel
Status: Only recorded in April after good summer rains.

- Habitat: Scrub.
- 203 *Numida meleagris* (Linnaeus), 1766 Helmeted Guineafowl
 Gewone tarentaal
 Status: Only noted in small numbers (five to eight birds) near the water-fall picnic area and a single bird near Stolshoek. August to December records only.
 Habitat: Thornveld.
 Remarks: Probably breeds in the park although there are no records.
- 228 *Fulica cristata* Gmelin, 1789 Redknobbed Coot
 Bleshoender
 Status: A pair was recorded in February and March, 1986.
 Habitat: So far only found in an area of small permanent pools near the Gamka Dam.
 Recorded breeding: March.
- 232 *Neotis ludwigii* Rüppell, 1837 Ludwig's Bustard
 Ludwigse pou
 Status: One pair occurred on the plains during November to March and again in June and July.
 Habitat: Scrub.
- 235 *Eupodotis vigorsii* (A. Smith), 1831 Karoo Korhaan
 Vaalkorhaan
 Status: Resident. As many as 14 have been seen on the plains at the same time. One seen on the plateau in December.
 Habitat: Scrub.
 Remarks: Almost certainly breeds in the park although there are no records.
- 249 *Charadrius tricollaris* Vieillot, 1818 Threebanded Plover
 Driebandstrandkiewiet
 Status: Uncommon, recorded from August to March.
 Habitat: Most often found on the mud banks of the Gamka Dam when the water level is low but also uses temporary pools after rain and the streams when these hold water.
 Recorded breeding: September.
- 258 *Vanellus armatus* (Burchell), 1822 Blacksmith Plover
 Bontkiewiet
 Status: Visitor to both the plains and the plateau. Recorded in March, November and December. Never more than five birds at one time.
 Habitat: Small dams and temporary pools after heavy rains.
- 270 *Tringa nebularia* (Gunnerus), 1767 Greenshank
 Groenpootruiter
 Remarks: Only recorded in September 1985 at the Gamka Dam.
- 297 *Burhinus capensis* (Lichtenstein), 1823 Spotted Dikkop
 Dikkop
 Status: A scarce resident.
 Habitat: Open thornveld.

- 301 *Rhinoptilus africanus* (Temminck), 1807 Doublebanded Courser
Dubbelbanddrawwertjie
Status: Single birds seen in January and March.
Habitat: Scrub.
- 344 *Pterocles namaqua* (Gmelin), 1789 Namaqua Sandgrouse
Kelkiewyn
Status: Single birds recorded from August to December with one April
sighting.
Habitat: Scrub.
- 349 *Columba guinea* Linnaeus, 1758 Rock Pigeon
Kransduif
Status: Resident.
Habitat: Rocky cliffs and ravines and also human habitation where they
breed in disused buildings.
Recorded breeding: October.
- 352 *Streptopelia semitorquata* (Rüppell), 1837 Redeyed Dove
Grootringduif
Status: A pair was present from October to December 1985.
Habitat: Large trees around the headquarters of the park.
- 354 *Streptopelia capicola* (Sundevall), 1857 Cape Turtle Dove
Gewone Tortelduif
Status: Resident.
Habitat: Thornveld and riverine growth.
Recorded breeding: November.
- 355 *Streptopelia senegalensis* (Linnaeus), 1766 Laughing Dove
Rooiborsduifie
Status: Resident.
Habitat: Thornveld and gardens.
Recorded breeding: November.
- 356 *Oena capensis* (Linnaeus), 1766 Namaqua Dove
Namakwaduijie
Status: Recorded throughout the year but numbers fluctuate consider-
ably. Largely absent during dry periods and moves in to breed
after rain.
Habitat: Riverine vegetation and adjacent thornveld. Scarce on the
plateau.
Recorded breeding: November to January.
- 386 *Chrysococcyx caprius* (Boddaert), 1783 Diederik Cuckoo
Diederikkie
Status: A breeding summer visitor, recorded from October to April.
Habitat: Thornveld and gardens on the plains only.
Recorded breeding: Found parasitising the Cape Sparrow in November
and March.
- 392 *Tyto alba* (Scopoli), 1769 Barn Owl
Nonnetjie-uil

Remarks: Several sightings prior to the present study and one recent record (June 1986).

- 400 *Bubo capensis* A. Smith, 1834 Cape Eagle Owl
Kaapse Ooruil
Status: Numbers difficult to assess but at least two pairs were resident.
Habitat: Rocky outcrops in grassveld on the plateau.
- 401 *Bubo africanus* (Temminck), 1823 Spotted Eagle Owl
Gevlekte Ooruil
Status: Numbers difficult to assess but five pairs were located. So far only found on the plains.
Habitat: Rocky hillsides and thornveld.
Recorded breeding: September.
- 406 *Caprimulgus rufigena* A. Smith, 1845 Rufouscheeked Nightjar
Rooiwangnaguil
Status: A pair was found on the plains in December 1985.
Habitat: Scrub.
Remarks: Almost certainly breeds but there are no records.
- 408 *Caprimulgus tristigma* Rüppell, 1840 Freckled Nightjar
Donkernaguil
Status: At present known only from the Stolshoek area near the headquarters of the park, where a bird was heard calling in February.
Habitat: Boulder-strewn hillsides.
- 415 *Apus caffer* (Lichtenstein), 1823 Whiterumped Swift
Witkruiswindswael
Status: Breeding visitor and only common around human habitation. No records from May to August.
Habitat: Attracted to buildings where it breeds in disused Greater Striped Swallow nests but feeds over much of the park.
Recorded breeding: October to February.
- 417 *Apus affinis* (Gray), 1852 Little Swift
Kleinwindswael
• Status: Breeding visitor and only common around human habitation. No records from May to July. Scarce on the plateau.
Habitat: Attracted to buildings for nesting but wanders widely over the park.
Recorded breeding: October to February.
- 418 *Apus melba* (Linnaeus), 1758 Alpine Swift
Witpenswindswael
Status: Breeding visitor, absent from April to July.
Habitat: Most often occurs in the ravines of the escarpment where it breeds.
Recorded breeding: September to December.
- 424 *Colius striatus* Gmelin, 1789 Speckled Mousebird
Gevlekte Muisvoël
Status: A single bird was recorded in March 1985 during a relatively wet period.

- 425 *Colius colius* (Linnaeus), 1766 Whitebacked Mousebird
Witkruismuisvoël
Status: Resident. The most common mousebird in the park.
Habitat: Thornveld and gardens, but not recorded from the plateau.
Recorded breeding: March, April, August, December.
- 426 *Colius indicus* (Latham), 1790 Redfaced Mousebird
Rooiwangmuisvoël
Status: Resident.
Habitat: Thornveld and gardens, but not recorded from the plateau.
Recorded breeding: April.
- 431 *Alcedo cristata* Pallas, 1764 Malachite Kingfisher
Kuifkopvisvanger
Remarks: A single bird was seen on several occasions during August 1985 at a reservoir at Stolshoek.
- 435 *Halcyon albiventris* (Scopoli), 1786 Brownhooded Kingfisher
Bruinkopvisvanger
Remarks: A single bird was recorded in riverine growth for several days during April 1985.
- 438 *Merops apiaster* Linnaeus, 1758 European Bee-eater
Europese Byvreter
Status: Summer visitor, present from September to December.
Habitat: Mainly confined to the vegetation along the stream beds. No records from the plateau.
Remarks: Bred near Stolshoek in November 1985.
- 451 *Upupa epops* Linnaeus, 1758 Hoopoe
Hoephoep
Status: Resident.
Habitat: Mostly confined to areas of human habitation, but also occurs in gardens and thornveld. No plateau records.
Remarks: Almost certainly breeds in the park, but there are no records.
- 465 *Lybius leucomelas* (Boddaert), 1783 Pied Barbet
Bonthoutkapper
Status: Resident.
Habitat: Thornveld and gardens.
Recorded breeding: December.
- 474 *Indicator indicator* (Sparrman), 1777 Greater Honeyguide
Grootheuningwyser
Status: A visitor recorded in January, February and August to October.
Habitat: Thornveld and riverine growth.
- 476 *Indicator minor* Stephens, 1815 Lesser Honeyguide
Kleinheuningwyser
Status: Apparently rare. Recorded in August 1984 and March 1986. Easily overlooked and may be more common than these records suggest.
- 480 *Geocolaptes olivaceus* (Gmelin), 1788 Ground Woodpecker
Grondspeg

Status: Resident.

Habitat: Largely confined to rocky hillsides along the lower escarpment and, less commonly, to rocky outcrops on the plateau.

Remarks: Not yet found breeding in the park but undoubtedly does so.

486 *Dendropicus fuscescens* (Vieillot), 1818 Cardinal Woodpecker
Kardinaalspeg

Status: Resident.

Habitat: Thornveld and riverine growth.

Recorded breeding: November to January.

498 *Miraфра sabota* Smith, 1836 Sabota Lark
Sabotalewerik

Status: Uncommon and apparently absent during drought periods.

Habitat: Scrub, especially where there are scattered thorn trees. Not recorded from the plateau.

Recorded breeding: April.

500 *Miraфра curvirostris* (Hermann), 1783 Longbilled Lark
Langbeklewerik

Status: Resident and mainly confined to the plains.

Habitat: Scrub.

Recorded breeding: March.

507 *Calandrella cinerea* (Gmelin), 1789 Redcapped Lark
Rooikoplewerik

Status: Uncommon, not recorded from May to August.

Habitat: Scrub, mainly on the plateau.

Remarks: Almost certainly breeds in the park although there are no records.

512 *Galerida magnirostris* (Stephens), 1826 Thickbilled Lark
Dikbeklewerik

Status: Most often recorded between October and March. No July or August records.

Habitat: Scrub and grassveld.

Remarks: Not yet found breeding in the park but almost certainly does so.

516 *Eremopterix verticalis* (Smith), 1836 Greybacked Finchlark
Grysluglewerik

Status: Common after rain when it moves into the park to breed. Recorded from November to April. No plateau records.

Habitat: Mixed scrub and grass.

Recorded breeding: March, April.

517 *Eremopterix australis* (Smith), 1836 Blackeared Finchlark
Swartoorlewerik

Status: As for the preceding species.

Habitat: As for the preceding species.

Recorded breeding: As for the preceding species.

518 *Hirundo rustica* Linnaeus, 1758 European Swallow
Europese Swael

- Status: A nonbreeding summer visitor from the Palaearctic. Absent during the drought but \pm 300 were present in the relatively wet summer of 1985/86. Recorded from November to March.
- 526 *Hirundo cucullata* Boddaert, 1783 Greater Striped Swallow
Grootstreepswael
- Status: Breeding visitor recorded from September to April.
Habitat: Common around human habitation where it most often breeds. Also nests in caves and overhangs in the ravines of the lower escarpment. Less common on the plateau.
Recorded breeding: October to February.
- 529 *Hirundo fuligula* Lichtenstein, 1842 Rock Martin
Kransswael
- Status: Resident.
Habitat: Mainly confined to rocky ravines and human habitation where it breeds but wanders widely over the park.
Recorded breeding: November to March.
- 530 *Delichon urbica* (Linnaeus), 1758 House Martin
Huisswael
- Status: A nonbreeding summer visitor from the Palaearctic recorded from November to March. It was absent during the drought but 40–50 birds were seen in the relatively wet summer of 1985/86.
- 533 *Riparia paludicola* (Vieillot), 1817 African Sand Martin
Afrikaanse Oewerswael
- Status: Single birds were recorded from the Gamka Dam, the Waterval picnic area and near Pienaar's Pass. No records from March to August.
- 543 *Oriolus oriolus* (Linnaeus), 1758 European Golden Oriole
Europese Wielewaal
- Status: This Palaearctic migrant was recorded in February 1986 in the large trees surrounding the headquarters of the park.
- 547 *Corvus capensis* Lichtenstein, 1823 Black Crow
Swartkraai
- Status: A single bird was recorded in November 1984.
- 548 *Corvus albus* Müller, 1776 Pied Crow
Witborskraai
- Status: Unexpectedly scarce. Single birds recorded in March and August.
Remarks: This species is common outside the park where it is attracted to bird and small mammal road casualties on which it feeds.
- 550 *Corvus albicollis* Latham, 1790 Whitenecked Raven
Withalskraai
- Status: Resident.
Habitat: Breeds in rocky ravines wandering across the open veld at times.
Recorded breeding: October.

- 551 *Parus afer* Gmelin, 1789 Southern Grey Tit
Piet-tjou-tjou-grysmees
Status: Resident.
Habitat: Tall bush on hillsides, riverine growth and bushveld.
Remarks: Not yet found breeding in the park but almost certainly does so.
- 557 *Anthoscopus minutus* (Shaw and Nodder), 1812 Cape Penduline Tit
Kaapse Kapokvoël
Status: Only recorded from July to December.
Habitat: Scrub, especially where there are scattered thorn trees. Not recorded from the plateau.
Recorded breeding: November.
- 567 *Pycnonotus nigricans* (Vieillot), 1818 Redeyed Bulbul
Rooioogtiptol
Status: Resident, and one of the most common birds in the park.
Habitat: Riverine growth, thornveld and gardens. Scarce on the plateau.
Recorded breeding: April.
- 577 *Turdus olivaceus* Linnaeus, 1766 Olive Thrush
Olyflyster
Status: Resident.
Habitat: Riverine vegetation and gardens. Not recorded from the plateau.
Recorded breeding: April, November, December.
- 583 *Monticola brevipes* (Waterhouse), 1838 Short-toed Rock Thrush
Korttoonkliplyster
Status: A single male was present at Stolshoek between April and June 1986.
- 586 *Oenanthe monticola* Vieillot, 1818 Mountain Chat
Bergwagter
Status: Resident.
Habitat: Rocky ravines and hillsides moving onto the plains at times.
Scarce on the plateau.
Recorded breeding: November to February.
- 589 *Cercomela familiaris* (Stephens), 1826 Familiar Chat
Gewone Spekvreter
Status: Common resident.
Habitat: Rocky hillsides and human habitation. It wanders onto the open veld at times.
- 590 *Cercomela tractrac* (Wilkes), 1817 Tractrac Chat
Woestynspekvreter
Status: A single bird was recorded in May 1985.
- 591 *Cercomela sinuata* (Sundevall), 1857 Sicklewinged Chat
Vlaktespokvreter
Status: Uncommon resident.
Habitat: Scrub, mainly on the plateau.
Recorded breeding: November.

- 592 *Cercomela schlegelii* (Wahlberg), 1865 Karoo Chat
Karoospekvreter
Status: Common resident.
Habitat: Scrub on the plains.
Recorded breeding: November to February.
- 595 *Myrmecocichla formicivora* (Vieillot), 1818 Anteating Chat
Swartpiek
Status: Several pairs were present during the height of the drought but inexplicably disappeared after the rains in January 1985. A single pair was noted in September 1986.
Habitat: Scrub.
- 596 *Saxicola torquata* (Linnaeus), 1766 Stonechat
Gewone Bontrokkie
Status: Scarce, perhaps only four pairs present. Recorded from November to March.
Habitat: Grassveld on the plateau.
Recorded breeding: December.
- 601 *Cossypha caffra* (Linnaeus), 1771 Cape Robin
Gewone Janfrederik
Status: Resident.
Habitat: Thornveld, riverine growth and gardens.
Recorded breeding: September to December.
- 614 *Erythropygia coryphaeus* (Lesson), 1831 Karoo Robin
Slangverklikker
Status: Resident.
Habitat: Scrub and thornveld. Largely confined to the plains.
Recorded breeding: August to November and March to April.
- 621 *Parisoma subcaeruleum* (Vieillot), 1817 Titbabbler
Bosveldtjeritik
Status: Resident.
Habitat: Riverine growth and thornveld.
Remarks: Undoubtedly breeds in the park although there are no records.
- 622 *Parisoma layardi* Hartlaub, 1862 Layard's Titbabbler
Grystjeritik
Status: Resident, but scarce on the plateau.
Habitat: Largely in hillside bush, but also in riverine growth alongside the Titbabbler.
Recorded breeding: March.
- 631 *Acrocephalus baeticatus* (Vieillot), 1817 African Marsh Warbler
Kleinrietsanger
Status: Breeding visitor recorded from September to March.
Habitat: Riverine growth specially where there are reeds.
Recorded breeding: November, December.
- 643 *Phylloscopus trochilus* (Linnaeus), 1758 Willow Warbler
Hofsanger

- Status: Summer migrant from the Palaearctic. Recorded from November to February. Scarce during the drought, but common in the relatively wet summer of 1985/86.
Habitat: Riverine growth and thornveld.
- 645 *Apalis thoracica* (Shaw and Nodder), 1811 Barthroated Apalis
Bandkeelkleinjantjie
- Status: Resident.
Habitat: Riverine growth and thornveld.
Remarks: Not recorded breeding in the park, but undoubtedly does so.
- 651 *Sylvietta rufescens* (Vieillot), 1817 Longbilled Crombec
Bosveldstompstert
- Status: Resident.
Habitat: Riverine growth and thornveld; sometimes wandering into the taller scrub.
Recorded breeding: November.
- 653 *Eremomela icteropygialis* (Lafresnaye), 1839 Yellowbellied Eremomela
Geelpensbossanger
- Status: Resident.
Habitat: Thornveld and scrub with scattered trees and bushes.
Recorded breeding: April, December.
- 654 *Eremomela gregaris* (Smith), 1829 Karoo Eremomela
Groenbossanger
- Status: Resident.
Habitat: Scrub on the plains and also in similar vegetation on the lower slopes of the escarpment.
Recorded breeding: November, December.
- 660 *Euryptila subcinnamomea* (Smith), 1847 Cinnamonbreasted Warbler
Kaneelborssanger
- Status: Resident but easily overlooked.
Habitat: Ravines and boulder-strewn slopes mainly in the foothills of the escarpment.
• Remarks: Not yet found breeding in the park, but undoubtedly does so.
- 669 *Cisticola subruficapilla* (Smith), 1843 Greybacked Cisticola
Gysrugtinkinkie
- Status: Resident.
Habitat: Scrub on both the plains and the plateau but more common at higher altitudes.
Recorded breeding: April, November.
- 677 *Cisticola tinniens* (Lichtenstein), 1842 Levaillant's Cisticola
Vleitinkinkie
- Status: Uncommon. Recorded from October to March with a single July record.
Habitat: Damp streamside vegetation on the plateau.
Recorded breeding: November.
- 686 *Prinia maculosa* (Boddaert), 1783 Karoo Prinia
Karoo langstertjie

- Status: Resident.
Habitat: Scrub, thornveld and riverine growth.
Recorded breeding: August to March.
- 687 *Prinia substriata* (Smith), 1842 Namaqua Prinia
Namakwalangstertjie
- Status: Resident.
Habitat: Riverine vegetation.
Recorded breeding: September, October.
- 688 *Malcorus pectoralis* Smith, 1829 Rufouseared Warbler
Rooioorlangstertjie
- Status: Resident.
Habitat: Scrub. Scarce on the plateau.
Recorded breeding: March.
- 689 *Muscicapa striata* (Pallas), 1764 Spotted Flycatcher
Europese Vlieëvanger
- Status: A nonbreeding visitor from the Palaeartic recorded from November to March.
Habitat: Riverine vegetation and gardens.
- 697 *Melaenornis infuscatus* (Smith), 1839 Chat Flycatcher
Grootvlieëvanger
- Status: Uncommon, with no records from May, July and August.
Habitat: Scrub especially where there are scattered bushes and trees.
Not recorded from the plateau.
Remarks: Not yet found breeding in the park.
- 698 *Sigelus silens* (Shaw), 1809 Fiscal Flycatcher
Fiskaalvlieëvanger
- Status: Resident.
Habitat: Thornveld and riverine growth.
Recorded breeding: August, December.
- 703 *Batis pririt* (Vieillot), 1818 Pririt Batis
Priritbosbontrokkie
- Status: Resident.
Habitat: Thornveld and riverine vegetation.
Recorded breeding: November.
- 706 *Stenostira scita* (Vieillot), 1818 Fairy Flycatcher
Feevlieëvanger
- Status: Resident. Tends to decrease in numbers during dry periods.
Habitat: Riverine growth and thornveld.
Recorded breeding: November.
- 710 *Terpsiphone viridis* (Müller), 1776 Paradise Flycatcher
Paradysvlieëvanger
- Status: Only one sighting of a single bird, probably on migration.
- 713 *Motacilla capensis* Linnaeus, 1766 Cape Wagtail
Gewone Kwikkie
- Status: Resident.

- Habitat: Regular in gardens and along the streams when these hold water.
Recorded breeding: November.
- 716 *Anthus novaeseelandiae* (Gmelin), 1789 Richard's Pipit
Gewone Koester
- Status: Resident; scarce in winter.
Habitat: Grassveld and scrub on the plateau.
Remarks: Has not yet been found breeding in the park, but undoubtedly does so.
- 717 *Anthus similis* Jerdon, 1840 Longbilled Pipit
Nicholsonse Koester
- Status: Apparently a summer visitor only. Recorded from September to March.
Habitat: Grassveld, scrub and occasionally enters thornveld.
Recorded breeding: November.
- 718 *Anthus leucophrys* Vieillot, 1818 Plainbacked Pipit
Donkerkoester
- Status: Uncommon. No May and June records.
Habitat: Grassveld and scrub on the plateau.
- 721 *Anthus crenatus* Finsch and Hartlaub, 1870 Rock Pipit
Klipkoester
- Status: Resident, but easily overlooked when not calling. Most often encountered on the plateau but recorded on the plains in May and June.
Habitat: Grassveld and rocky outcrops and scrub on the plains.
Recorded breeding: March.
- 732 *Lanius collaris* Linnaeus, 1766 Fiscal Shrike
Fiskaallaksman
- Status: Resident.
Habitat: Thornveld and riverine vegetation.
Recorded breeding: October to December.
- 733 *Lanius collurio* Linnaeus, 1758 Redbacked Shrike
Rooiruglaksman
- Remarks: One was seen on the plains in December 1985 after rains.
- 742 *Tchagra tchagra* (Vieillot), 1816 Southern Tchagra
Grysborstchagra
- Status: Resident.
Habitat: Riverine vegetation and thornveld.
Recorded breeding: November.
- 746 *Telophorus zeylonus* (Linnaeus), 1766 Bokmakierie
Bokmakierie
- Status: Resident.
Habitat: Scrub especially where there are scattered large bushes, thornveld and hillside bush.
Recorded breeding: November to February.

- 757 *Sturnus vulgaris* Linnaeus, 1758 European Starling
Europese Spreeu
Remarks: A vagrant only to the park. It is common in nearby Beaufort West.
- 759 *Spreo bicolor* (Gmelin), 1789 Pied Starling
Witgatspreeu
Status: Resident.
Habitat: Largely confined to stream beds and the adjacent vegetation, but wanders over much of the park at times.
Recorded breeding: December to March.
- 760 *Creatophora cinerea* (Meuschen), 1787 Wattled Starling
Lelspreeu
Status: Recorded in the autumn of 1985 after rain.
Habitat: Thornveld and riverine growth.
- 769 *Onychognathus morio* (Linnaeus), 1766 Redwinged Starling
Rooivlerk Spreeu
Status: Resident, but numbers fluctuate considerably.
Habitat: Rocky ravines and cliffs, riverine vegetation and gardens.
Recorded breeding: September.
- 770 *Onychognathus naboroupp* (Daudin), 1800 Palewinged Starling
Bleekvlerkspreeu
Status: Resident.
Habitat: As for the preceding species.
Recorded breeding: November to April.
- 775 *Nectarinia famosa* (Linnaeus), 1766 Malachite Sunbird
Jangroentjie
Status: Resident.
Habitat: Mainly confined to thornveld but wanders across the scrub in search of flowers.
Recorded breeding: August to December.
- 783 *Nectarinia chalybea* (Linnaeus), 1766 Lesser Doublecollared Sunbird
Klein-Rooiborsuikerbekkie
Status: Resident. Numbers fluctuate according to available food sources.
Habitat: Mainly the riverine vegetation and adjacent thornveld but wanders considerably in search of flowers.
Recorded breeding: January, February, July, August.
- 788 *Nectarinia fusca* Vieillot, 1819 Dusky Sunbird
Namakwasuikerbekkie
Status: Resident. Numbers increase between November and March.
Habitat: Thornveld but wanders into the scrub in search of flowers.
Recorded breeding: November to March.
- 796 *Zosterops pallidus* Swainson, 1838 Cape White-eye
Kaaapse Glasogie
Status: Resident.
Habitat: Riverine vegetation, thornveld and gardens.

Recorded breeding: November, December.

- 801 *Passer domesticus* (Linnaeus), 1758 House Sparrow
Huismoosie

Status: Resident.

Habitat: Most common around human habitation but sometimes found in riverine growth.

Recorded breeding: November, December.

- 803 *Passer melanurus* (Müller), 1776 Cape Sparrow
Gewone Moosie

Status: Resident.

Habitat: Most frequent near human habitation but also occurs in riverine growth and thornveld.

Recorded breeding: November to April.

Remarks: This species is apparently the main host of the Diederik Cuckoo in the park.

- 804 *Passer griseus* (Smith), 1836 Greyheaded Sparrow
Gryskopmoosie

Remarks: This species has recently greatly expanded its range across the Cape Province. It was first recorded in the park in December 1985 when a pair was seen in the garden at Stolshoek. It has subsequently been seen at a number of localities in thornveld throughout the park and appears to be increasing in numbers. Suspected of breeding within the park.

- 813 *Ploceus capensis* (Linnaeus), 1766 Cape Weaver
Kaapse Wewer

Remarks: A single bird was seen at Stolshoek at the height of the drought (December 1984). It is known to breed along the Sak River, just outside the park, in wet years.

- 814 *Ploceus velatus* Vieillot, 1819 Masked Weaver
Swartkeelgeelvink

Status: Resident.

- Habitat: Riverine vegetation, thornveld and reed-beds (where it breeds). Also in the gardens at Stolshoek and Mountain View.

Recorded breeding: October to April.

- 821 *Quelea quelea* (Linnaeus), 1758 Redbilled Quelea
Rooibekkewelea

Remarks: A flock of 12 birds was seen in March 1986.

- 824 *Euplectes orix* (Linnaeus), 1758 Red Bishop
Roovink

Status: Seasonal visitor recorded from November to April.

Habitat: Breeds in reeds along the larger streams but wanders into the adjacent vegetation in search of food.

Recorded breeding: November to April.

Remarks: Small breeding colonies are to be found below the Gamka Dam, at Waterfall picnic area, at Doornhoek and along the Sak River on the plateau.

- 846 *Estrilda astrild* (Linnaeus), 1758 Common Waxbill
Rooibekkie
 Status: Resident.
 Habitat: Mainly in riverine vegetation particularly where there are reeds.
 Recorded breeding: November.
- 847 *Estrilda erythronotus* (Vieillot), 1817 Blackcheeked Waxbill
Swartwangsysie
 Remarks: A single male was seen in thornveld near Stolshoek in March 1986. It could have been an escapee from captivity as the species does not normally occur south of the Orange River.
- 850 *Estrilda melanotis* (Temminck), 1823 Sweet Waxbill
Suidelike Swie
 Remarks: A pair was seen near the Gamka Dam in February 1986. The possibility that they were escapees from captivity cannot be ruled out.
- 856 *Amadina erythrocephala* (Linnaeus), 1758 Redheaded Finch
Rooikopvink
 Status: Only recorded on two occasions in March 1985 at the height of the drought.
 Habitat: Thornveld and gardens.
- 860 *Vidua macroura* (Pallas), 1764 Pintailed Whydah
Koningrooibekkie
 Status: Uncommon and only recorded from August to December.
 Habitat: Mainly encountered in the garden at Stolshoek but also wanders along the streams.
 Remarks: Probably parasitises the Common Waxbill but there are no records.
- 872 *Serinus canicollis* (Swainson), 1838 Cape Canary
Kaapse Kanarie
 Status: Common at times but numbers fluctuate considerably. Unexpectedly many remained in the park during the most intense drought. No records from April to June.
 Habitat: Mainly attracted to the trees around Stolshoek on the plains but more widespread on the plateau where it occurs in grassveld and scrub. Uses the trees around Mountain View for breeding.
 Recorded breeding: October to December.
- 876 *Serinus alario* (Linnaeus), 1758 Blackheaded Canary
Swartkopkanarie
 Status: Resident, forming into flocks of up to 40 birds at times. Numbers fluctuate and most leave the park during the driest periods.
 Habitat: Scrub and thornveld.
 Remarks: Not yet found breeding but almost certainly does so.
- 878 *Serinus flaviventris* (Swainson), 1828 Yellow Canary
Geelkanarie
 Status: Inexplicably scarce.

Habitat: Scrub and open thornveld.

Remarks: This species is normally fairly common in the Great Karoo and its scarcity in the park can perhaps be attributed to the severe drought of 1984. The local race is *S. f. quin-toni*, named after local farmer William Quinton.

- 879 *Serinus albogularis* (Smith), 1833 Whitethroated Canary
Witkeelkanarie

Status: Resident. Forms into flocks of up to 20 birds during the colder months.

Habitat: Scrub, thornveld and riverine vegetation.

Recorded breeding: November to April.

- 881 *Serinus gularis* (Smith), 1836 Streakyheaded Canary
Streepkopkanarie

Status: Scarce. Only recorded in July and November 1985.

Habitat: Riverine vegetation and thornveld.

- 885 *Emberiza capensis* Linnaeus, 1766 Cape Bunting
Rooivlerkstreepkoppie

Status: Resident. Remains at the highest areas even during the coldest of weather.

Habitat: Mainly rocky hillsides but also the scrub-covered plains and the grassveld of the plateau.

Recorded breeding: March.

- 887 *Emberiza empetuani* (Smith), 1836 Larklike Bunting
Vaalstreepkoppie

Status: Resident. During the drought individuals were occasionally encountered but after the heavy rains early in 1985 they invaded the park in great numbers to breed.

Habitat: Scrub particularly where grass intrudes. Scarce on the plateau.

Recorded breeding: January to April.

†The following species have been omitted from the list either because they were recorded before the commencement of the present investigation or they are pending confirmation.

- 122 *Gys coprotheres* (Forster), 1798 Cape Vulture
Kransaasvoël

Remarks: There used to be a small roost on the cliffs of the escarpment above Doornhoek but there have been no recent sightings of vultures.

- 143 *Circaetus gallicus* Smith, 1829 Blackbreasted Snake Eagle
Swartborsslangarend

Remarks: There is an undated sight record from 1978.

- 148 *Haliaeetus vocifer* (Daudin), 1800 African Fish Eagle
Visarend

Remarks: Recorded overflying the park near Walker Dam during March, 1983, prior to the present survey.

- 173 *Falco subbuteo* Linnaeus, 1758 Hobby Falcon
Europese Boomvalk
Remarks: A single undated sighting prior to present survey.
- 182 *Falco rupicoloides* Smith, 1829 Greater Kestrel
Grootrooiwalk
Remarks: No sightings during the present survey, but seen on several occasions during 1983.
- 208 *Anthropoides paradisea* (Lichtenstein), 1793 Blue Crane
Bloukransvoël
Remarks: Reported from the plateau prior to the present survey.
- 255 *Vanellus coronatus* (Boddaert), 1783 Crowned Plover
Kroonkiewiet
Remarks: No recent sightings in the park, though the species is frequently seen in Beaufort West.
- 382 *Clamator jacobinus* (Boddaert), 1783 Jacobin Cuckoo
Bontnuwejaarsvoël
Remarks: A single sighting prior to the present survey.
- 411 *Apus apus* (Linnaeus), 1758 European Swift
Europese Windswael
Remarks: Large numbers of swifts seen over the park after heavy rains in December 1985 and January 1986 were thought to be European swifts.
- 428 *Ceryle rudis* (Linnaeus), 1758 Pied Kingfisher
Bontvisvanger
Remarks: A sighting prior to the present survey.
- 460 *Tockus alboterminatus* (Bettikofer), 1889 Crowned Hornbill
Gekroonde Neushoringvoël
Remarks: A small party was seen in the park in the early 1980's.
- 520 *Hirundo albigularis* Strickland, 1849 Whitethroated Swallow
Witkeelswael
Remarks: Reported from the park prior to the present survey.
- 523 *Hirundo dimidiata* Sundevall, 1850 Pearlbreasted Swallow
Pêrelborsswael
Remarks: A recent sighting for the Stolshoek area. The possibility of confusion with the House Martin cannot be ruled out.
- 528 *Hirundo spilodera* Sundevall, 1850 South African Cliff Swallow
Familieswael
Remarks: A single sighting for the plateau prior to the present survey.
- 681 *Cisticola fulvicapilla* (Vieillot), 1817 Neddicky
Neddikkie
Remarks: Reported by several observers but there is no suitable habitat and the possibility of confusion with the similar Greybacked Cisticola cannot be ruled out.
- 727 *Macronyx capensis* (Linnaeus), 1766 Orangethroated Longclaw
Oranjekeelkalkoentjie

Remarks: Reported from the plateau during 1983 prior to the present survey.

842 *Lagonostica senegala* (Linnaeus), 1766 Redbilled Firefinch

Rooibekrobbin

Remarks: A pair was seen in dense thornveld below the Gamka Dam just prior to the present survey.

Discussion

A total of 157 species was recorded in the park during the study period. Of these 77 were resident, 29 were breeding visitors, 32 were nonbreeding visitors and 19 can be considered vagrants as they were each only recorded on one occasion. A total of 86 species was found breeding. Heavy rains during the study period, following the severe drought, stimulated large-scale late-summer breeding which is discussed in more detail elsewhere (Martin & Martin 1985).

A further 17 species are included in a supplementary list. Of these, 14 were recorded prior to the present study but not seen during the study period and three are considered so unusual as to require confirmation before being admitted to the list.

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